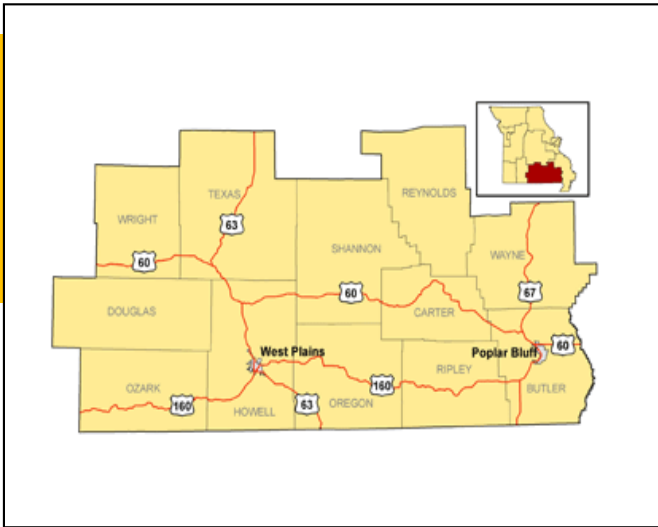


# South Central Region Labor Market Analysis



The South Central Region is situated in the center of the southern portion of the State of Missouri. Counties included in the South Central Region are: Butler, Carter, Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Reynolds, Ripley, Shannon, Texas, Wayne and Wright Counties.

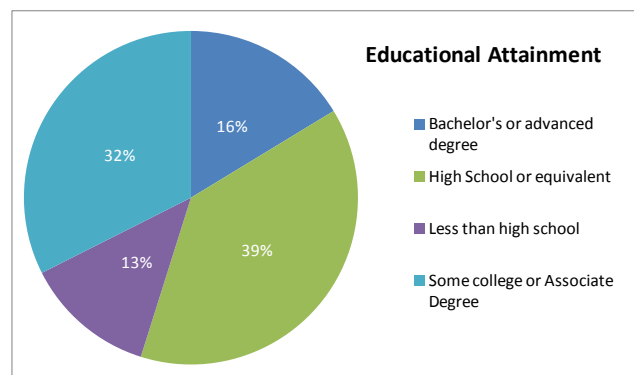
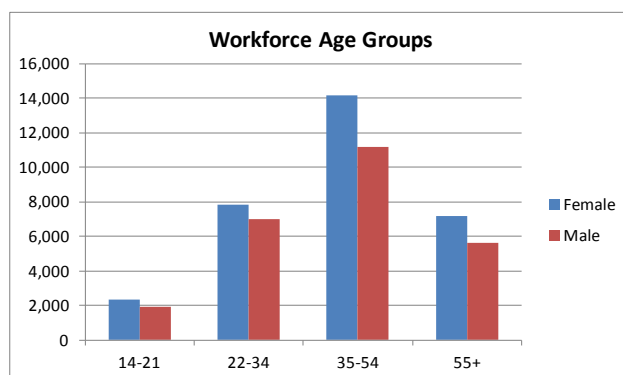
This region includes several major cities such as West Plains and Poplar Bluff. Many of Missouri's major highways cross through this region. Highway 60 and Highway 160 run east/west through the region, and Highway 63 and Highway 67 cross north/south, allowing a great deal of travel through the area.

## Workforce

The total population of the Missouri workforce is 2,671,013, and the South Central Region is home to 57,300 or 2.15%, of the state's workforce. The age group for workforce is defined as 14 years or more. The county with the largest population is Butler County, with 17,580 followed by Howell County with 14,595.

The population of the workforce is aging. In the South Central Region, 22.26% of the workforce is age 55 or older. The percentage for the state is slightly lower, with an average of 21.44% for the same age group.

The education attainment rate for the South Central Region is lower than the average for Missouri. In the South Central Region, 87% of the workforce has a high school diploma or higher, compared to 88% for the state. The number of those who have not obtained a high school diploma is 13% in the South Central Region and 12% statewide.



Source: MERIC WIA County Demographics compiled from LEHD data ([missourieconomy.org/regional/index.stm](http://missourieconomy.org/regional/index.stm))

## Missouri Labor Supply & Demand

The Missouri Labor Supply & Demand Analysis Report, published March 2015, takes job seeker information from people who registered with jobs.mo.gov during 2014 and compares it to employer job ads during the same time period. *Healthcare* and *Business and Sales* have the highest gaps, while *Construction/Related* and *Production* have the largest surplus of workforce.

South Central WIA	Total	Health Care & Related	Business & Sales	Transportation	Science & Technology	Other Services	Food Service	Management & Support	CIMR*	Production
# Job Ads		1,059	575	477	194	246	220	659	200	124
% Job Ads		28.2%	15.3%	12.7%	5.2%	6.6%	5.9%	17.6%	5.3%	3.3%
# Jobseekers		648	671	615	130	467	450	1,793	1,143	1,083
% Jobs Sought		9.3%	9.6%	8.8%	1.9%	6.7%	6.4%	25.6%	16.3%	15.5%
Gap		18.9%	5.7%	3.9%	3.3%	-0.1%	-0.6%	-8.1%	-11.0%	-12.2%

\*CIMR = Construction, Installation, Maintenance & Repair

Source: Missouri Labor Market Supply & Demand Analysis, March 2015

## Commuting Patterns

Commuting patterns tell us a great deal about a region. In the South Central Region, a majority of the workforce commutes to a different county to work. In fact, over half the workforce in 9 of the 12 counties in the region leave the county where they live for employment. In contrast, only 38% of the workforce leaves the South Central Region for employment. From these facts, we can conclude that most persons commute to a different county within the South Central Region for employment. In addition, we can also infer that persons living in the South Central Region are skilled in the industries and occupations in demand in this region.

Percent of Employees Working Outside of Home County			
Butler	33%	Reynolds	74%
Carter	77%	Ripley	67%
Douglas	96%	Shannon	74%
Howell	32%	Texas	59%
Oregon	71%	Wayne	67%
Ozark	85%	Wright	29%

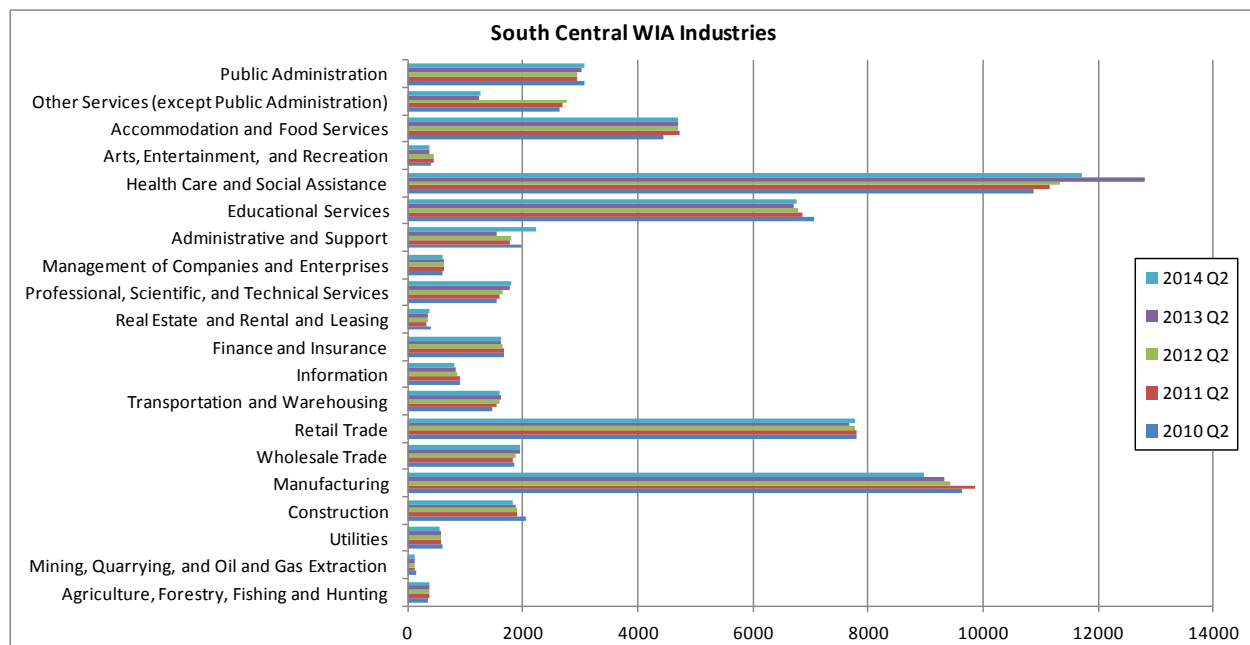
Source: US Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, LEHD, On the Map (onthemap.ces.census.gov)

## Industries

The chart illustrates the changes in employment in the South Central Region by industry during the 5 year period. Industries employing the most people at the end of the second quarter of 2014 (most recent data available) are *Health Care and Social Assistance*; *Manufacturing* and *Retail Trade*. Employment in these three industries equals 49% of the total employment in the region.

Some industries experienced overall employment growth over the last 5 years. The highest levels of employment growth are seen in the industries of *Health Care and Social Assistance* and *Accommodation and Food Services*. Other industries saw decreasing employment numbers during the same 5 year period. *Other Services (except Public Administration)* and *Manufacturing* are the industries with the highest employment decreases.

The largest employers in the South Central Region are in a variety of industries, including state government and education, along with many private sector firms such as; health care with **Poplar Bluff Medical Center**; **Ozarks Medical Center** and **Pershing VA Medical Center**; manufacturers such as **Briggs & Stratton Corporation**, **Libla Industries, Inc.**, **Scroll Compressors**, and **The Gates Corp**; and temporary employment services such as **Productive Staffing, LLC** and **Penmac Staffing Services**.



Source: US Census Bureau, QWI Explorer Application ([qwexplorer.ces.census.gov](http://qwexplorer.ces.census.gov))

## Occupations

In *The ABCs of Missouri Career Grades 2012-2022*, letter grades are assigned to 800+ occupations based on the total job openings and average wage of the occupation. Job openings include both new growth (jobs added to the workforce) and replacements (vacancies created by employees moving to a different occupation or retiring). Projections are made for each occupation on a statewide basis as well as each of the regions. Therefore, a job may be graded differently in the statewide projections and each region based on the openings and wages for specific areas of the state.

In the South Central Region, approximately 21,000 job openings are projected between 2012 through 2022. Most of the job openings, over 12,000 are projected in the Grade B category. Many of the job openings are in entry level occupations, such as *Cashiers; Food Preparation and Serving Workers; Laborers; Retail Salespersons; Personal Care Aides; Waiters and Waitresses and Office Clerks.*

Each occupation is also classified in the Now, Next and Later categories. A “Now” job would require short- to moderate-term on-the-job training lasting no more than 12 months. “Next” occupations generally require an Associate’s degree or substantial vocational training lasting more than one year. “Later” occupations usually require a bachelor’s or advanced degree and in addition to specific work experience.

South Central WIA - Good Outlook Careers				
	Title	Grade	Openings	Average Wage
N O W	Cashiers	B	1,250	\$18,045
	Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	B+	941	\$16,958
	Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	B+	876	\$20,023
	Retail Salespersons	B	597	\$22,400
	Personal Care Aides	A	566	\$18,242
	Waiters and Waitresses	B	415	\$18,494
	Office Clerks, General	B	404	\$25,591
N E X T	Registered Nurse	A	621	\$50,838
	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	A	400	\$32,231
	Nursing Assistant	B	395	\$20,196
	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	A	298	\$33,722
	Teacher Assistants	B	198	\$20,876
	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	B+	197	\$30,450
	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	B	165	\$32,080
L A T E R	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	A	377	\$ 41,885
	General and Operations Managers	A+	295	\$ 63,971
	Middle School Teachers, Except Special & Career/Technical Ed.	A	229	\$ 47,408
	Accountants & Auditors	A+	213	\$ 57,656
	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special & Career/Technical Ed.	B+	189	\$ 40,519
	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	A	76	\$ 56,638
	Healthcare Social Workers	B	74	\$ 34,630

Source: The ABCs of Missouri Career Grades 2012-2022, South Central Region

MERIC also prepares a document listing the top 20 occupations based on the number of job openings for each region, and the *South Central Region Top Openings* is attached.

Another source for identifying in-demand occupations is through real-time data. A tool called Burning Glass compiles information from job postings on over 38,000 sites into a database that can be queried to find information on jobs. This information provides insight on the jobs employers are currently hiring, occupations that are in-demand and skills that employers require for employees.

The Missouri Real-Time Labor Market Summary compiles information queried through Burning Glass. Briefs are published for the State of Missouri, and for each region. Since the brief is published every other month, the information is always current. The most recent publication is attached to this summary.

Below is a list of the top 25 occupations posted in job ads by employers in the South Central Missouri Region in calendar year 2014.

Burning Glass -- Top Job Postings in 2014	
Occupation	Job Postings
*+Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	248
*+Retail Salespersons	146
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	145
*+Registered Nurses	145
Customer Service Representatives	108
+First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	98
*+Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	91
*+Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	84
Physical Therapists	84
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	83
Speech-Language Pathologists	67
*+Nursing Assistants	66
*+Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	64
Childcare Workers	63
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	61
Medical and Health Services Managers	57
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	56
+Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	48
Electronic Home Entertainment Equipment Installers and Repairers	38
Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	38
Human Resources Specialists	37
Driver/Sales Workers	36
Office and Administrative Support Workers, All Other	35
Occupational Therapists	34
*+Cashiers	33

Source: Labor Insight/Burning Glass Occupation Data

\*Occupation on projected top 20 South Central Region Top Openings list

+Occupation listed as South Central Region Good Outlook Career in Career Grades

Within the sources of information for employment projections and in real-time data in job ads, we see many of the occupation titles repeated, especially in the Now and Next categories. Reviewing the data found in multiple sources helps to validate the need for these occupations.

March 2015